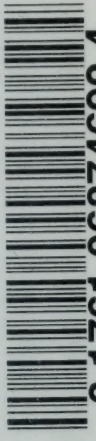


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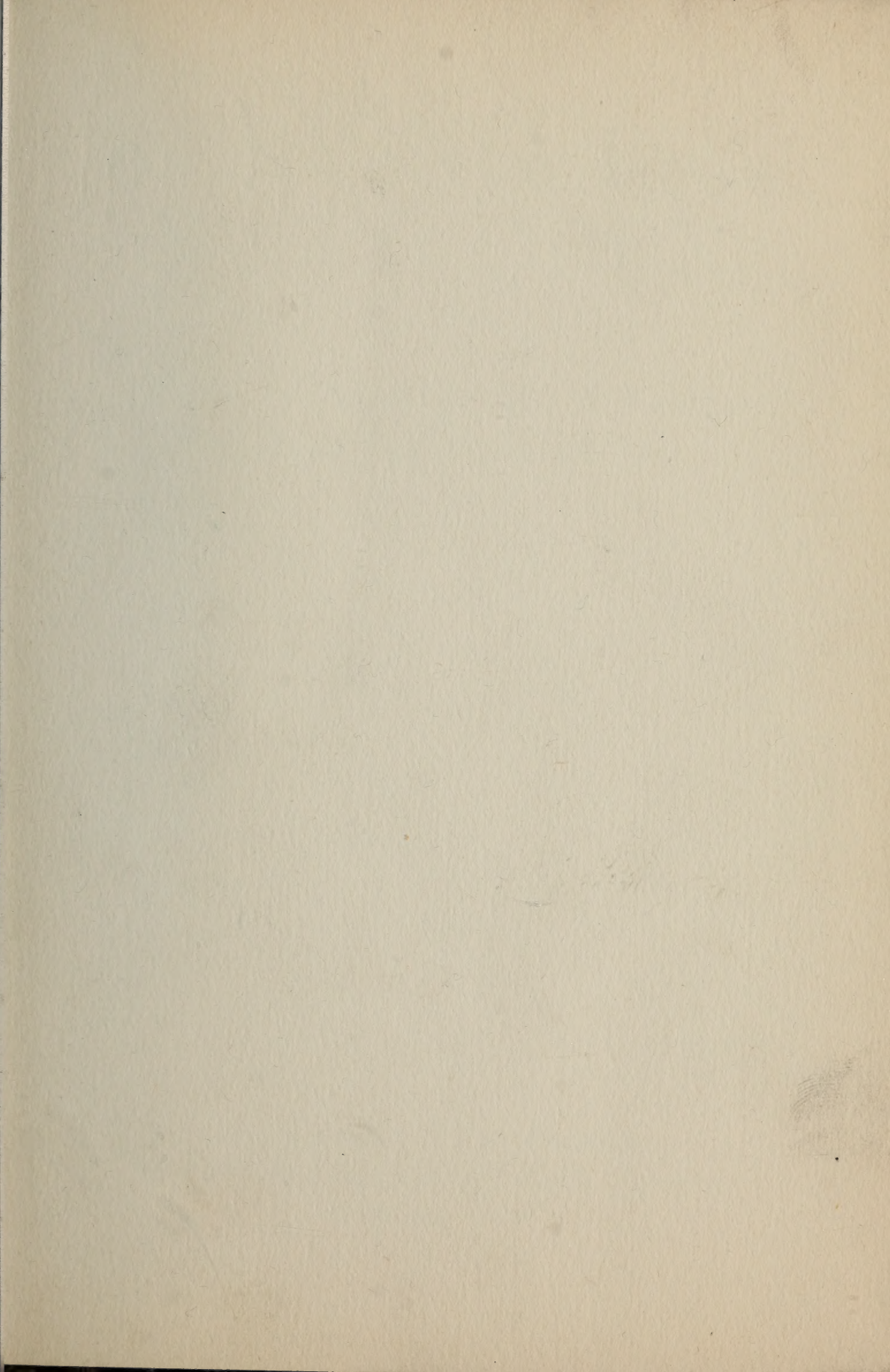















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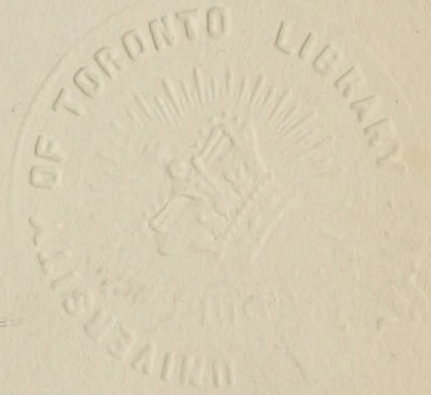


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# KEEPING THE ROAD OPEN

*or*

How to Administer a Large  
Advertising Appropriation Wisely



416109  
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The American Multigraph Sales Company  
Cleveland, Ohio





*Clear the road—and keep it open*

*Direct-mail work does not do away with legitimate publicity, but it helps to rid your business of extravagant and ill-advised publicity*



# Keeping the Road Open

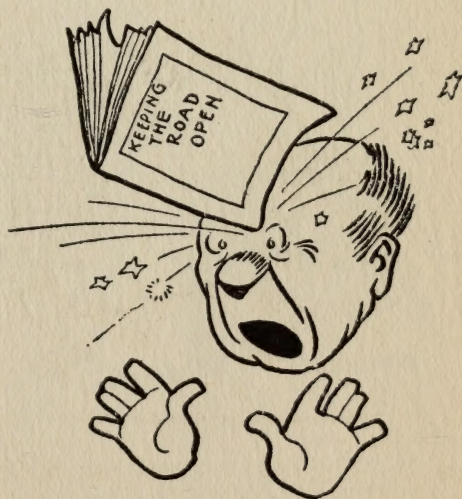
**T**HE road over which your business travels leads from you to the ultimate buyer and user of what you have to sell—be it manufactured articles, professional knowledge, service or anything else whatever.

Hard work built that road—grubbed up the rocks and stumps, laid the foundations, rolled out and paved the surface. Your own brains engineered it, your own business ability and business experience did the work. Thrift, common sense, economy, courage, industry went into it.

## Are You Keeping It Open and in Repair?

This book will come like a blow between the eyes to many a self-satisfied road-builder—if he is still sufficiently honest to admit his own mistakes.

It is profoundly true that scores and scores of business enterprises reach a certain success and then cast overboard the common-sense business principles that built them. The end and object of the road—



*A blow between the eyes for the satisfied road builder*



the individual customer, client, consumer or whatever you call him, is forgotten. The road is choked with a motley horde of advertising mountebanks, peddlers, bunco steerers, and gamblers. Money is spent like water, but, as in many a city government, very little except water gets into the repair of the highway.

And soon or late traffic is blocked.

Of all the evil influences that beset a business that has become prosperous, unwise advertising is the worst, because it appears wrapped in a sort of mystery. It must be relegated to the care of a self-appointed priesthood. The business man singled out for the sacrifice is told "he doesn't know anything about it." He meekly consents, allows the bandage to be put over his eyes and lays himself obligingly on the altar!



*The business man singled out for sacrifice lays himself on the altar*

We propose to tear off that bandage and strip the mystery from advertising.

Verily unwise advertising covers a multitude of sins—just as many an old hen sets on china (or even rotten) eggs that never hatch. But when the well fed business man gets this "setting habit," he con-



tinues to set on his cold storage eggs, and clucks away till something breaks and reveals the rottenness in Denmark!

What else can explain a sensible man handing over \$150,000 to another to spend for him, without any limitations, any information as to where it is going, any way of backing out till the last dollar is spent. Yet that is exactly what a manufacturer we know did recently, and at the end of a year his business had not increased a penny. There are many like him.



*Lots of advertisers are setting on cold storage eggs that won't hatch*

The most dangerous maniacs are those sane on every subject but one—and sometimes that one is advertising!

We will not say that the man who spends a million dollars for advertising in a single year is a lunatic; but we believe he would profit from an investigation of his business by hard-headed people who had absolutely nothing to gain by his million dollar expenditure!

Personally we do not believe it is possible to spend a million dollars wisely in a year's advertising (and we saw a contract for over that amount



recently). We do not believe that the store, every foot of whose exterior—front, sides, back and roof—is plastered with signs, wins more trade than the one which has a few good ones in the most conspicuous spots.



*The unwise advertiser has only himself to blame*

He who complains that his money was misspent without his knowledge ought to wear a tall paper hat of conical shape—for the facts are easily obtained and easy to understand.

### **Why this Book was Written**

We have published this book simply because we have been driven to it by our own intimate relations with advertising, and through the investigations of a number of experienced business men and advertising men, some of whom act as Advisory Counsel to our Business Aid Department.

We have come upon so many cases of appalling mismanagement of advertising funds that they would be unbelievable, unless backed by intimate knowledge of the facts.

Furthermore, these cases often involved neglect of such simple, every-day business principle



and practise that when confronted with the facts the culprit called the man who would save him from such mistakes a liar!

Truth often hurts—but what hurts the boss may be good for the business.

We have no quarrel with any reputable publication which excludes fake advertising from its columns. We have only praise for agencies that give real service. We find no fault with any publisher, solicitor, copy writer, artist, engraver, printer or other person who strives to improve mediums and methods of general publicity.



*Some advertisers are afraid to look Truth in the face*

But we do have a chip (of the old business block) on our shoulder for the business man who thinks that general publicity should always absorb the lion's share of his expenditure and that he can neglect personal work *with the individual*.



*We have a chip on our shoulder for some business men*

This work, in a large industry cannot be done with sufficient speed, economy and



thoroughness by personal representatives. There is only one way to do it, and that is *by advertising that goes through the mails direct to a definite individual addressed by name.*

The investigations referred to revealed gross neglect of business principles in other directions also; but the one chief cause of advertising extravagance and inefficiency is neglect of *direct-mail work.* This will be brought out in more detail in subsequent pages; meantime view these examples:

### The Missing Link

A certain manufacturing concern had been running an attractive and convincing campaign in standard publications. A beautiful book of great interest to women was sent in response to inquiries, and the reader was referred to local dealers. "All of whom," to quote from the advertisements, "carry this line. Otherwise the goods will be sent direct on receipt of price."

Over a hundred thousand dollars for advertising, well-designed and written, a direct reference to the



*Sometimes it's "too much trouble" to serve Mr. Common People*



dealers, plenty of prospects, a meritorious article—surely nothing was left undone to bring success.

But note this—an inquisitive individual visited every dealer in the City of Cleveland, *and did not secure a single article of the goods advertised*. In two cases he ordered the goods—and received others. In every other case he was offered a substitute, refused to accept, asked to have the articles ordered from the factory and *was refused*, on the score of the trouble and expense of special orders!

Evidently this appropriation is *not* being wisely administered after all; for the important “inside” work that would make the dealer a real link in the chain has been overlooked.

An example of another—and more general—character is found in the history of another manufacturer.

During four years, from the time the advertising department of this Company was created, sales were increased from approximately \$1,750,000 to slightly less than \$10,000,000. The proportion of cost of inside to outside advertising averaged three to one.

Thirty-six thousand dollars a year was spent in standard magazines for educational and creative work and over \$100,000 was spent on inside adver-



tising. This is accounted for by the fact that the inside work included direct advertising to jobbers, architects, and contractors and retailers.

The four years of development increased the business above the desired maximum. Evidently these people felt too prosperous for they now tried the experiment of kicking the ladder of success out from under the business. Cost of every kind of inside advertising was reduced, advertising materials cheapened, follow-up pruned and clipped. In fact the pruning and clipping was so thorough that it removed the *fruit-producing blossoms* as well as the life-giving leaves. The



*Don't prune off all the life-giving leaves and fruit-producing blossoms*

effect, while slow in being felt, was nevertheless certain and it is safe to say that the lost prestige will never be entirely regained, although the amount spent in attempting to get it back is twice the amount saved by false economy, because the effort is *against* the tide and competition has been given an overwhelming advantage.



## Causes of Advertising Failures

Thus many a failure has been laid at the door of advertising because some so-called "little thing" has been considered unnecessary. The concern has become prosperous, it no longer investigates itself at regular intervals. It knows it all and no one can tell it anything new. The big man, the man of brains, the man who has built the business, leaves advertising to some one else—what is it to him? Or he makes the equally foolish mistake of posing as an "advertising expert" on a platform built of gold bricks without the straw of experience or the mortar of wisdom.



*The man who "knows it all" is posing on a platform of gold bricks*

He meddles with every design and every piece of copy; he drives his advertising manager to despair; he writes advertisements addressed to himself, and of course is delighted with them when he sees them in print.

He knows nothing about writing or designing good advertising and his interference is an injury to his business.



But he does know the business principles which should lie back of every campaign—and never even looks to see if they are there!

Why?

Just because he doesn't know that advertising is business, that's all.

He thinks it is white space, big type, pictures, signs, painted displays, magazines, newspapers, booklets, catalogs, and so on.

But it isn't. These are merely the *media of expression*. Advertising is deeper, it is doing the same old things that built up the business—only doing them on a larger scale, more scientifically, more *efficiently*, more *economically*.

It means doing these things:—

Finding out who buys and who ought to buy your goods.

Dealing with buyer and prospective buyer as individuals.



Don't try to cover more states than you can cover thoroughly

Increasing the efficiency of your salesmen.

Preserving intimate relations with dealers, and showing them how to make more money for themselves by doing it for you.



Covering territory with a fine tooth comb.

Keeping out of territory that you cannot take care of properly.

Making no promises that you can't keep.

Reducing selling cost, by better selling, and *reducing manufacturing cost by increasing your output.*

Doing nothing without a preliminary investigation.

Using the mediums and methods that bring results at lowest cost, in the shortest time, with the least friction.

Take the lid off *your* advertising sometime and see if you find these aforementioned things underneath.

If your advertising is costing too much and earning too little,

### **You Have Only Yourself to Blame**

Business—your business—should be a sphere, the one solid with the greatest mass and the least surface, the most inside and the least outside, the one type of perfect proportion.



*Are you afraid to take the lid off your advertising?*



Advertising has got to be distributed through the mass. It cannot be pasted on like a label, tied on like a tag, or painted or nailed on like a sign.



*Do you tack your advertising on to the surface of your business?*

Some don't even go that far, they tie it on the end of a string and pull in the string once in a while to see if the bait is still there. Or they lay it on the roof and trust that the wind of adversity will not carry it off.

Just a change of a letter, by the way, turns "Advertise" into "Adversity."

*Many so-called advertising successes are due to the brute force of money, without judgment, finesse, or far-seeing sagacity. It makes a big noise while it lasts—but the day of reckoning will come.*

### **First Steps for Little Learners**

Really some of these gentlemen should go back to the primary school and learn to read and recite this little story:

### **Progress in Advertising**

First, you make something and then you go out and sell it to some one, if anybody will buy it.

Second, you get so busy that you can't go yourself and you send other men. Clerks, representatives, dealers.

Third, you write letters, because your men can't see everybody.

Fourth, you are a direct-mail advertiser.

Fifth, you begin to use general publicity. This does not allow you to talk to individuals any more. You have to talk to a lot of

people all at once. But it makes your name known and gives a hint of what you have to sell.

It will extend your business rapidly, *provided you*

*are ready for it*, and provided you can enlarge your personal and direct-mail work sufficiently to

*complete the sale and retain the goodwill* of the human beings that enter into your sales problem.

Is there any "Sixth" to this story?

We hope not in your case; but in many cases there is—Sixth,

general publicity swallows up everything else and the business along with it.

1. PERSONAL REPRESENTATION
2. DIRECT MAIL ADVERTISING
3. DEALER DISTRIBUTION
4. GENERAL PUBLICITY.



*Many big advertisers need primary education in the essentials*



*Don't let general publicity swallow the business*



Why do so many concerns change their advertising agents with such frequency?

Why do their lists of publications show such astonishing variation from year to year?

Why is it that there is such a disproportion between the price paid for publicity and the reputation obtained?

We could name you ten national advertisers, beginning with one who spends \$40,000 a year on general publicity and ending with one who spends \$250,000, and unless you have personal acquaintance with the facts *you can not tell which is which.*

The honest truth is that the one has acquired as great a name and reputation for his \$40,000 as the other with his \$250,000.

*But, look behind the scenes and find out how the lists were made up and what other advertising and sales work is being done.*

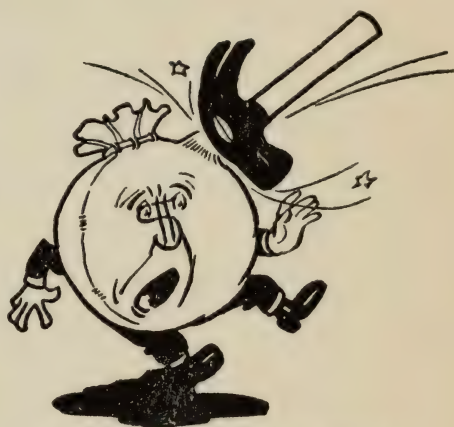
### **Publicity Brings Problems**

There are many of these, but we content ourselves with a single example.

Consider a manufacturing industry of some extent in which general publicity is a real need in order to keep selling cost down by making a large increase in volume possible. Suppose also, that

the product is marketed through distributors and retailers of different character, and must enlist the good will of architects, engineers, builders, contractors, carpenters, painters, decorators and others. Suppose also that it has a varied field of use among different classes of the population. Suppose also that its success and reputation depends to a considerable extent on whether the ultimate user knows how it should be used.

Now, if your publicity travels too fast, and your *inside work* lags behind, your roadway will be blocked by complaints, dissatisfaction, dead, half-dead and dying dealers, delayed shipments, defective goods, damages in transit due to poor packing, and other troubles easy to obtain and hard to lose.



*Look out lest selling cost knock  
profit in the head*

And if you go to the other extreme, and instead of learning how to regulate publicity, throw it overboard altogether, your demand will presently go into a decline and selling cost will knock profit in the head!

How are you going to keep the balance true? What percentage of your appropriation should go to general publicity? What mediums will you



use? Who will make up the list and apportion the appropriation to *all* its proper functions?

Can you do it today? Can you make the proper readjustment next year? If you can't, you are taking a big chance to hand some one \$500,000 and tell him to "go ahead," without first investigating him from A to Z and finding out if he, in turn, is fitted to investigate *you and your business*, as he certainly will if he knows advertising and is honest.

Come back now from the general to the specific and consider one of the few merchandising manufacturers that really do understand these problems.

### Concerning a Promotion Department

We very recently heard a young man explaining to a force of salesmen what the Promotion Department of their business was, and what it was doing for them. This young man was not a Silver-Tongued Siren, nor a Precocious Promoter, but he was *well-trained* by superiors who were always on the job.



*A well-trained executive is worth more than a silver-tongued siren*

His talk was swift, clear, concise, specific. He was at first frequently interrupted

by questions; but they soon ceased, for he had anticipated every one of them in his report! His response, "I am just coming to that" was so often repeated that finally it was followed by a burst of laughter and applause every time a rash interrogation was made.

We won't stop to give his definition of a Promotion Department, but here are a few things *his* Promotion Department was doing *through the mails*.

Developing prospective dealers in all territories by circularizing good lists.

Establishing active dealers in towns not visited by representatives.

Assisting distributors to establish dealers by referring consumers' inquiries to these dealers.

Assisting dealers by circularizing consumers in their territory.

Replying direct to consumers' inquiries.

Referring these inquiries to active dealers.

Securing valuable information and lists of names from dealers and salesmen, which could be used in circularizing carpenters, contractors, decorators, painters, architects and users.

Much of this material was referred to other departments, for special correspondence, permanent records and so on.



Bear in mind that this work is all in the line of promoting sales and co-operating with dealer and salesman. At the same time other departments were giving highly specialized service to the same classes—architects, dealers, users, contractors, carpenters and so on, *along different lines*, such as the use *and application of the product*.

Note also how this falls in line with our previous definitions of advertising—the *media of communication* were printed and typewritten matter, drawings, photographs, etc., but *these media were not the advertising*. The advertising was a highly organized, well-planned, well-systemized *method of securing a preconceived result advantageous to the business*. It is not strange that in the last four years alone, the annual sales of this company have increased nearly twenty-fold.

No one can succeed in advertising till he realizes this fact—that the means, however important in themselves, are incidental to the plan.

And this fits a retail business as well as a manufacturing one. Wherever you stand you are one of the links in the merchandizing chain, and you should understand the whole and be in sympathy with its principle.

The retail market is different, its problems are more local, but it must still base its plans on the

same old factors, profit, territory, distribution, selling cost and *service to the individual*.

A large retailer engaged the services of an advertising agency, which believes in making money for its clients as well as out of them. The agency got up and printed a folder to be distributed by mail to a good list, advertising a shirt-waist sale. When the executive heads of the business saw this folder, it looked so cheap to them in comparison with the expensive features they had used,

that they said it would disgrace them. But, fortunately, they were induced to use it, and it proved that good selling argument is more profitable than fine feathers. Women flocked to the store and ordered shirt-waists *by number*, carrying the little folder with them for identification!



*They didn't like it—but it brought the business*

No newspaper advertisement had ever “pulled” so well, for several reasons. Here are some of them:

1. There was no “waste” circulation about that folder—it was all pure “waist” circulation.
2. It cost much less than newspaper space big enough to tell the same story.
3. It was personal in its character.



4. It did not have to divide attention with a hundred other attractions.

5. It left a definite memorandum easy to slip into the shopping bag.

### **Individualizing a Business**

That, when you "get down to brass tacks" is the function of direct-mail advertising.

But to plan and execute profitable direct-mail work is not necessarily easy. It is a task worthy of great sales and advertising managers, and there is very little knowledge of its great possibilities or of its specific application to different lines of business.

Many a direct-mail advertiser loads his cannon with a motley assortment of typewritten and printed junk, aims it at the landscape, and trusts in providence. No wonder we so often hear the old platitude about the waste-basket as the final haven of advertising literature! If the same time, effort and attention had been put on direct-mail advertising that has been put on General Publicity, this objection itself would go into the waste-basket.



*What ought to be done to the man who says  
"All direct-mail advertising goes into  
my waste-basket"*

## To Individualize Your Business You Must First Become Acquainted with the Individuals

No matter if you already think you know it all, start investigations—by competent, unprejudiced persons—to learn what you do not know!

Investigate the attitude of dealers to you and your products.

Investigate the application of what you sell to the needs of individual buyers.

Investigate what others have done and are doing in the same field.

Investigate local and territorial possibilities.

Find out who *does* buy your goods—many a manufacturer doesn't even know that.

Compile and study all data obtainable.

Then classify all individuals to whom you propose to appeal, so that you can find the quickest and most efficient method for reaching each group.

Go through your mailing lists and eliminate the superannuated, the babes in arms, the inmates of jails, asylums and cemeteries.



*If you could meet some of your mailing list face to face!*



Learn how to compile *good* mailing lists, and how to keep them up to date.

See that every bit of correspondence leaving the house carries the right message. Then you will be able to take up a real study of direct-mail *literature* in the form of complete campaigns.

Insist that this true business-building under competent direction shall be the first object of your Advertising Department and your advertising appropriation. The experience and knowledge so gained will not only be profitable *in itself*, it will do another great thing for you.

It will show you just what place general publicity has in your business and how to select the right mediums for it, so as to obtain the highest efficiency for the least expense.

In other words, it will strip the mystery from advertising, and save you from selling the soul of your business to the bidder with the brightest vest and the loudest yawp.

As to the further importance of this particular department of advertising, let us take a few concrete examples.



*Don't sell the soul of your business to the bidder with the brightest vest*

How many advertising campaigns have been ruined by the fact that the dealers were not sufficiently educated as to the talking points of the goods and the consumer was not educated as to how to use them properly?

Both of these results could have been achieved at minimum cost through direct-mail work.

Again, how often inquiries are secured at trifling cost—only to have the *cost per sale* mount to ruinous figures, through inefficient follow-up!

Again, making collections by mail is a subject which has not been given due consideration. Yet, when rightly understood, it tends to the saving of thousands of dollars a year.

The value of circular letters and enclosures to lists of possible prospects, according to vocations, is something which has been worked out by comparatively few retail business houses or manufacturers. Yet, in all cases where it has received the consideration which it deserved, it has resulted in large increases of business at comparatively small cost.

Elaborate co-operative plans for assisting dealers have proved profitable in hundreds of cases. Of course, personal representation is of great assistance in this connection; but it is impossible to do this work right without maintaining a department



in the home office, which can plan and prepare features which the dealer can use and give him timely assistance and sound business advice, as opportunity may occur. Note what is being done



*"Forcing distribution" is too much like jamming it down the dealer's throat*

today in the electrical field, if you doubt whether such work is profitable. This co-operation is more profitable than forcing the dealer, by general publicity. He doesn't like "forcible feeding" any more than the militant suffragettes.

The internal house-organ—that is a periodical publication issued to members of one's own organization, has done more perhaps to keep up the enthusiasm of a sales force than anything else except a strong, virile, optimistic personality in the sales manager himself.

Yet, how few concerns there are today, which are making the use that they could of such an economical and immediately profitable stimulator.

Oftentimes the very man who says, "We have no particular use for direct-mail work in our line of business," is the very one who is most neglecting

some great opportunity for sales increase. Don't be too sure that this doesn't mean *you*. Only an investigation can tell. If it could be demonstrated to you that you could take twenty thousand or forty thousand dollars from your appropriation for general publicity, and still appear to the world to be doing just as much general advertising as before, you would be glad, no doubt, to put that money in your pocket. And, if at the same time, you had pretty good evidence that you could take half or all of that saving and put it into the sort of intimate direct work which we have been discussing, and thereby increase your profits another fifty or a hundred thousand, you would probably be glad to know it.

There is absolutely no question that in hundreds, if not thousands of cases this very thing can be accomplished. It is no disparagement to your intelligence or ability to assume that it may be profitable to some extent in your own case. As a matter of fact, the principles of this more efficient and economical administering of advertising appropriation have never before been clearly enunciated, and for the very good reason that they have not before been studied in the light of large experience with all classes of direct-mail users.



That, however, is just the advantage we possess. By the very nature of our business, we have been forced to gather comprehensive information from many sources on the application of direct-mail advertising to different lines of business. Doubtless your own is among them, and by filling out the data form inclosed with this book, you can obtain more specific and constructive suggestions than we could include in a book to be read alike by merchant and manufacturer, dealer, jobber, professional man, and all others who advertise.

Don't merely turn this book over to some one else. You're the man for whom it's written. You have to pay for the mistakes. You owe it to your business to put common sense into your advertising. Give it your personal time and attention.















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**University of Toronto  
Library**

**DO NOT  
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THE  
CARD  
FROM  
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POCKET**

Acme Library Card Pocket  
LOWE-MARTIN CO. LIMITED



